

Performance-based scholarships (for college students) Higher Education

Literature review updated December 2016.

As part of WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies, WSIPP determines "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using an approach called meta-analysis. For detail on our methods, see our [Technical Documentation](#). At this time, WSIPP has not yet calculated benefits and costs for this topic.

Program Description: Performance-based scholarships programs provide students with financial incentives to remain in college, often targeting low-income young adults. Scholarships are provided when students fulfill certain academic benchmarks such as maintaining a 2.0 GPA or enrolling in college. There are no initial academic requirements for the receipt of performance-based aid. Students usually receive their aid in monthly or quarterly installments over one or more terms.

Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	No. of effect sizes	Treatment N	Adjusted effect sizes and standard errors used in the benefit-cost analysis						Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)	
			First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated				
			ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age	ES	p-value
College grade point average	1	366	0.148	0.483	26	0.148	0.483	26	0.148	0.759
Graduate with any degree	4	2572	0.073	0.043	28	0.073	0.043	28	0.073	0.092
Obesity	1	371	0.008	0.092	26	0.008	0.092	26	0.008	0.933
Persistence into 2nd year	4	2572	0.037	0.040	26	0.037	0.040	26	0.037	0.351
Persistence into 3rd year	4	2572	0.042	0.051	27	0.042	0.051	27	0.042	0.407
Persistence into 4th year	2	1287	0.030	0.051	27	0.030	0.051	27	0.030	0.562
Persistence into 5th year	1	751	0.136	0.065	32	0.136	0.065	32	0.136	0.035
Remedial credits earned	1	505	0.177	0.481	26	0.177	0.481	26	0.177	0.713
Regular smoking	1	388	0.024	0.123	26	0.024	0.123	26	0.024	0.844

Meta-analysis is a statistical method to combine the results from separate studies on a program, policy, or topic in order to estimate its effect on an outcome. WSIPP systematically evaluates all credible evaluations we can locate on each topic. The outcomes measured are the types of program impacts that were measured in the research literature (for example, crime or educational attainment). Treatment N represents the total number of individuals or units in the treatment group across the included studies.

An effect size (ES) is a standard metric that summarizes the degree to which a program or policy affects a measured outcome. If the effect size is positive, the outcome increases. If the effect size is negative, the outcome decreases.

Adjusted effect sizes are used to calculate the benefits from our benefit cost model. WSIPP may adjust effect sizes based on methodological characteristics of the study. For example, we may adjust effect sizes when a study has a weak research design or when the program developer is involved in the research. The magnitude of these adjustments varies depending on the topic area.

WSIPP may also adjust the second ES measurement. Research shows the magnitude of some effect sizes decrease over time. For those effect sizes, we estimate outcome-based adjustments which we apply between the first time ES is estimated and the second time ES is estimated. We also report the unadjusted effect size to show the effect sizes before any adjustments have been made. More details about these adjustments can be found in our [Technical Documentation](#).

Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

- Mayer, A.K., Patel, R., Rudd, T., & Ratledge, A. (2015). *Designing scholarships to improve college success: Final report on the Performance-Based Scholarship Demonstration*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.
- Richburg-Hayes, L., Brock, T., LeBlanc, A., Paxson, C., Rouse, C.E., & Barrow, L. (2009). *Rewarding persistence: Effects of a performance-based scholarship program for low-income parents*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

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